

These compacts, which have already been ratified by the affected States and provinces, require the consent of Congress to take effect under the Compacts clause of the Constitution.

This particular bill has bipartisan support of members of the other body and from States participating in these compacts. They were passed by unanimous consent in the Senate. I am not aware of any opposition to this bill.

The need for a coordinated response to fires and other emergencies is clear. I want to commend the participating States and provinces for their effort to protect human lives and property, and to safeguard the environment in this region. We need to have continued cooperation between bordering areas. I commend those who are involved in this, and I urge adoption of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take some time to pay tribute here to another colleague, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DOC HASTINGS), who, in his endeavors over the course of time in the last session and before, has come to us time and time again to press for not just this compact, but another one that we will be taking up as the next order of business.

He has worked tirelessly in this regard, and because of his perseverance, has helped to solve some serious problems in his region of the world.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Senate Joint Resolution 35, a joint resolution granting the consent of Congress to the Pacific Northwest Emergency Management Arrangement. A compact entered into by the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, as well as the Province of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory.

Mr. Speaker, these state and provincial governments have negotiated this compact to coordinate regional responses to natural disasters. As we all know, disasters do not respect state or national boundaries. To plan for and respond to these events, these northwest states and provinces have chosen to adopt a cooperative regional approach. This will improve the allocation of material, personnel, and services to mobilize as many resources as possible in the event of a natural disaster. Furthermore, the compact allows for cooperation across state and national borders without sacrificing the state or national sovereignty.

Mr. Speaker, this regional effort is non-controversial and was passed unanimously by the other body on July 31 of this year. The compact is a local and regional effort that requires the consent of Congress to take effect.

I urge my colleagues to support the efforts of these northwest states and provinces to improve emergency preparedness and pass this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate joint resolution, S.J. Res. 35.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof), the rules were suspended and the Senate joint resolution was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT OF BILLS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER SUSPENSION OF THE RULES ON TODAY

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House resolution 589, I hereby give notice that the following suspensions will be considered today:

H.R. 4572, to clarify that governmental pension plans of the possessions of the United States shall be treated in the same manner as State pension plans for purposes of the limitation on the State income taxation of pension income;

H.R. 4831, to temporarily reenact chapter 12 of title 11 of the United States Code;

S. 417, Energy Conservation Reauthorization Act;

H.R. 4660, to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act 1956 to provide rewards for information leading to the arrest or conviction of any individual for the commission of an act, or conspiracy to act, of international terrorism, narcotics-related offenses, or for serious violations of international humanitarian law relating to the former Yugoslavia.

#### GRANTING CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF CONGRESS TO AN INTERSTATE FOREST FIRE PROTECTION COMPACT

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1134) granting the consent and approval of Congress to an interstate forest fire protection compact.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1134

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. CONSENT OF CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The consent and approval of Congress is given to an interstate forest fire protection compact, as set out in subsection (b).

(b) COMPACT.—The compact reads substantially as follows:

#### “THE NORTHWEST WILDLAND FIRE PROTECTION AGREEMENT

“THIS AGREEMENT is entered into by and between the State, Provincial, and Territorial wildland fire protection agencies signatory hereto, hereinafter referred to as “Members”.

“FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION OF the following terms and conditions, the Members agree:

#### “Article I

“1.1 The purpose of this Agreement is to promote effective prevention, suppression and control of forest fires in the Northwest wildland region of the United States and adjacent areas of Canada (by the Members) by providing mutual aid in prevention, suppression and control of wildland fires, and by establishing procedures in operating plans that will facilitate such aid.

#### “Article II

“2.1 The agreement shall become effective for those Members ratifying it whenever any two or more Members, the States of Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, or the Yukon Territory, or the Province of British Columbia, or the Province of Alberta have ratified it.

“2.2 Any State, Province, or Territory not mentioned in this Article which is contiguous to any Member may become a party to this Agreement subject to unanimous approval of the Members.

#### “Article III

“3.1 The role of the Members is to determine from time to time such methods, practices, circumstances and conditions as may be found for enhancing the prevention, suppression, and control of forest fires in the area comprising the Member's territory; to coordinate the plans and the work of the appropriate agencies of the Members; and to coordinate the rendering of aid by the Members to each other in fighting wildland fires.

“3.2 The Members may develop cooperative operating plans for the programs covered by this Agreement. Operating plans shall include definition of terms, fiscal procedures, personnel contacts, resources available, and standards applicable to the program. Other sections may be added as necessary.

#### “Article IV

“4.1 A majority of Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of its general business. Motions of Members present shall be carried by a simple majority except as stated in Article II. Each Member will have one vote on motions brought before them.

#### “Article V

“5.1 Whenever a Member requests aid from any other Member in controlling or preventing wildland fires, the Members agree, to the extent they possibly can, to render all possible aid.

#### “Article VI

“6.1 Whenever the forces of any Member are aiding another Member under this Agreement, the employees of such Member shall operate under the direction of the officers of the Member to which they are rendering aid and be considered agents of the Member they are rendering aid to and, therefore, have the same privileges and immunities as comparable employees of the Member to which they are rendering aid.

“6.2 No Member or its officers or employees rendering aid within another State, Territory, or Province, pursuant to this Agreement shall be liable on account of any act or omission on the part of such forces while so engaged, or on account of the maintenance or use of any equipment or supplies in connection therewith to the extent authorized by the laws of the Member receiving the assistance. The receiving Member, to the extent authorized by the laws of the State, Territory, or Province, agrees to indemnify and save-harmless the assisting Member from any such liability.

“6.3 Any Member rendering outside aid pursuant to this Agreement shall be reimbursed by the Member receiving such aid for any loss or damage to, or expense incurred in the operation of any equipment and for the cost of all materials, transportation, wages, salaries and maintenance of personnel and equipment incurred in connection with such request in accordance with the provisions of the previous section. Nothing contained herein shall prevent any assisting Member from assuming such loss, damage, expense or other cost or from loaning such equipment or from donating such services to the receiving Member without charge or cost.